

# EXAMINING THE ROLE OF DIVERSITY IN SCHOOL DYNAMICS: AN INTERNSHIP THAT HELPS TO MEET NCATE STANDARD

## 4\*

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### Abstract

This is an internship experience designed to help professors of educational leadership better prepare students for diversity leadership and to help colleges of education comply with the spirit and letter of NCATE Standard 4. In particular, this internship experience will offer diverse experiences for candidates. It is particularly beneficial for programs with graduate students who serve in districts or schools where there is little to no cultural diversity.



NOTE: This module has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and sanctioned by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a scholarly contribution to the knowledge base in educational administration.

### Introduction

In general, school success for African American and Latino students remains in crisis warranting the attention of school leaders. With such disparity in achievement, school leadership programs are charged with preparing candidates for the full scope of leadership challenges and opportunities that lay ahead. This preparation would intentionally include more meaningful curriculum and experiences that help candidates understand the influence of culture on their role as school leaders.

#### Rationale

According to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), an accrediting body for colleges of education, there are currently four mandates regarding diversity. These four areas are Curriculum and Experiences, Diverse Candidates, Diverse P-12 Experiences for Candidates, and Diverse

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Faculty. The program in which this author teaches has met with challenge its attempts to honor these mandates. Professors of educational leadership are intensely frustrated with this charge as their surrounding districts may have a negligible amount of cultural diversity. This paper imparts an internship experience designed to help professors of educational leadership better prepare students for diversity leadership and to help colleges of education comply with the spirit and letter of NCATE Standard 4. In particular, this internship experience will offer diverse experiences for candidates. It is particularly beneficial for programs with graduate students who serve in districts or schools where there is little to no cultural diversity.

#### Internship Experience

Students are requested to visit with and collaborate with the administrator of a public school that has a multicultural population. The multicultural population must consist of at least two cultural minority groups that are different than the cultural group of the candidate. For candidates already serving in a school with a multicultural population consisting of at least two cultural minority groups that are different than the cultural group of the candidate, he or she need not seek out an additional school. Those students may use their current school for this internship experience.

For the respective school, they must assemble a contextual analysis collecting data which includes but is not limited to:

- School type (magnet, charter, unique opportunities or focus of the school, etc.)
- Student demographics (number in each grade, gender, race/culture, SES)
- Performance on standardized achievement tests by (grade, race/culture, SES)
- Enrollment in honors and/or advanced placement classes (gender, race/culture, grade and discipline)
- Discipline data (frequency, types of infractions, number of students recorded, repeat offenders, gender, race/culture, SES of those involved)
- Extracurricular activities – athletics and non athletic (gender, race/culture, SES)
- SPED and 504 percentage of student identification (grade, gender, race/culture, SES)
- Staff demographics (number, certified/non certified, gender, race/culture, grade and discipline)

With these data, candidates must write an analysis of their findings. The analysis should include:

- Percentage of “diverse” students who are proficient and advanced
  - Percentage of “diverse” students who are participating in honors and/or advanced placement classes
  - Percentage of “diverse” students who are participating in SPED and 504
  - Percentage of “diverse” students who are reported in the discipline data
  - Percentage of “diverse” students who are participating in extracurricular activities
  - Whether diverse students are proportionally represented in each category
  - Reasons why data are as such
  - Examine the role that diversity (race, ethnicity, low SES, SPED, etc.) plays in the participation of the aforementioned student-related matters
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- Take into account the ethical, moral, legal responsibility and professional accountability the administrator has for the diverse populations
  - Discuss what they, as the administrator of a culturally responsible school, would do to improve each of the aforementioned findings.

Students should be encouraged to attend an academic and a non-academic event of the respective school. In each case, students must record the number of hours they spent on the campus of the respective school.

#### Conclusion

This internship experience can improve candidates’ knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for leading diverse populations and help candidates understand the influence of culture on education. Candidates will also become more aware of potentially disparate and unfair policies and practices that have an impact on the ability of diverse students to learn and develop in a psychologically safe academic environment.

### Author Bio

As a former founding principal of a multicultural parochial school, a multicultural independent school and as a consultant for public charter school design, this novice professor of educational leadership is contributing to her department, college and university and to the field of educational leadership and educational psychology by incorporating diversity leadership considerations that foster unifying and healthy academic environments. Her academic research explores social attitudes of leaders, recruitment and retention of minorities and hope-based schooling practices for all learners. She makes conference and other presentations on these topics as well.